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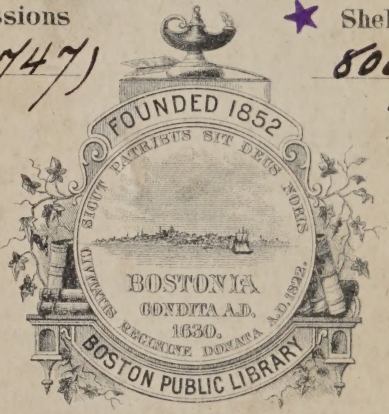

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ADVICE

TO THE

YOUNG WHIST PLAYER;

CONTAINING MOST OF THE

MAXIMS OF THE OLD SCHOOL,

WITH THE

Author's Observations on those he thinks Erroneous;

ALSO

SEVERAL NEW ONES,

EXEMPLIFIED

BY APPOSITE CASES;

And a Method of acquiring a Knowledge of the Principles on which they are grounded,

POINTED OUT TO THE

INEXPERIENCED WHIST PLAYER.

.....

From the second London Edition.

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BY THOMAS MATTHEWS, ESQ.

BOSTON,
Printed and Published by Joshua Belcher.
1812.

(2674 7)
Samuel Shaw Jr
Aug 22, 1841.

TO

THE READER.

It is a fact of general notoriety, that notwithstanding the numerous theories published, and almost universal practice, of a science, where profit and amusement are combined, a *capital* whist player is scarcely *ever*, and even what may be termed a *good one*, but rarely, met with.

There is, indeed, in almost every provincial town some 'Squire, Lawyer, or Parson, who, you are told, plays an *excellent game of whist*; but a judge always finds them ignorant of what may be termed their alphabet, and at best, possessed of a good memory and capable perhaps of playing their own cards tolerably. The reason of this will appear obvious to those who reflect, that in all other arts and sciences,

no man but commences by making himself master of the *first rudiments;* but the whist player, in general, sits down to lose perhaps considerable sums of money, without any further preparation than the having got a few *general* maxims by rote, which, from want of comprehending, he applies *universally*, and is consequently much oftener wrong than right in their application.

When the beginner reads, that with two or more of a sequence to his partner's lead, (as king and queen) he should put on the lowest, he does *so* or *not*, generally, without thinking it *material;* but after he is made to comprehend, that his queen's passing demonstrates to his partner that the king cannot be in his left-hand adversary's hand, or the knave in his, and the consequent advantages to him in playing his suit (whereas if he puts on the *king*, it leaves him in ignorance as to the *queen* and *knave*) he will never after err in those cases, and will also know how to profit by similar correctness in his future partners.

To beginners I wish to inculcate the absolute necessity that they should proceed gradually; and before they sit down to play at all, make themselves masters of the *different leads*,

modes of playing sequences, and some few of the most simple rules. When they feel within themselves that they have acquired some insight into the *theory*, let them begin to reduce it to practice in the best set of players they can meet with. Beginning to play with bunglers, will not only prevent *present* improvement; but, as experience shews, when once they have acquired erroneous ideas, they will find it next to impossible to eradicate them in *future*.

By these means they will gradually acquire a knowledge of the more intricate combinations of the game, and comprehend *when* and *why* the general maxims are to be *adhered to* or *violated*; without which, I cannot too often repeat, they more frequently puzzle than inform the player.

Though in many instances I have deviated from the common maxims; yet I am not vain enough to think I shall add much to the knowledge of the experienced whist player; but I am convinced, that an attentive study of this little treatise, *in the mode prescribed*, will enable the beginner to sit down without disadvantage, in a very short time, with most sets he meets with. It is needless to tell those

who play for considerable stakes, that it is *their* interest to acquire a knowledge of the game, at least, sufficient to defend their money; but it is in my opinion, equally necessary to the players for *amusement*, as they term it, which for the most part consists, *to a bungler*, in being scolded and found fault with, from the moment he sits down to the breaking up of the party.

How far I have succeeded in my intention must be left to the judgment of the Readers, to whom, with all due respect, these Maxims are dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

The following definition of the game of Whist is recommended to the attentive perusal of the Reader, previous to his studying the maxims; as nothing will facilitate his comprehension of them so much as a clear idea of the ultimate end to which they all tend.

Whist is a game of *Calculation*, *Observation*, and *Position or Tenace*.

Calculation teaches you to plan your game, and lead originally to advantage; before a card is played, you suppose the dealer to have an honour and three other trumps; the others, each an honour and two others. The least reflection will shew, that as it is two to one, that your partner has *not* a named card; to lead on the supposition he *has* it, is to play against calculation. Whereas the odds being in favour of his having *one* of *two* named cards, you are justified in playing accordingly. Calculation is also of use on other occasions, which the maxims will elucidate; but after a

few leads have taken place, it is nearly superceded by *observation*. Where the set are *really good* players, before half the cards are played out, they are as well acquainted with the material ones remaining in each other's hands as if they were to see them. Where two regular players are matched against two irregular ones, it is nearly the same advantage as if *they* were permitted to see each other's cards, while the *latter* were denied the same privilege.

It is an axiom, that the nearer you play approaches to what is called the dumb man the better.

These may be called the foundation of the game, and are so merely mechanical, that any one possessed of a tolerable memory may attain them.

After which comes the more difficult science of *position*, or the art of using the two former to advantage; without which, it is self-evident, they are of no use. Attentive study and practice will, in some degree, ensure success; but genius must be added before the whole finesse of the game can be acquired—however,

Est quiddam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.

DIRECTIONS AND MAXIMS

FOR

BEGINNERS.

1.

STUDY all written maxims with the cards placed before you, in the situations mentioned. Abstract directions puzzle much oftener than they assist the beginner.

2.—Keep in your mind that general maxims pre-suppose the game and hand, at their commencement: and that material changes in them, frequently require that a different mode of play should be adopted.

3.—Do not attempt the practice till you have acquired a competent knowledge of the theory; and avoid as much as possible, at first, sitting down with bad players. It is more difficult to eradicate erroneous, than to acquire just ideas.

4.—Never lead a card without a reason—though a wrong one; it is better than accustoming yourself to play at random.

5.—Do not at first puzzle yourself with many calculations. Those you will find hereafter mentioned are sufficient, even for a proficient.

6.—Do not accustom yourself to judge by consequences. *Bad* succeeds sometimes, when *good* play would not. When you see an acknowledged judge of the game play in a manner you do not comprehend, get him to explain his reasons, and while fresh in your memory, place the same cards before you; when once you can comprehend the case, you will be able to adapt it to similar situations.

7.—Before you play a card, sort your hand carefully, look at the trump card, and consider the score of the game, the strength of your own hand, and form your plan on the *probable situation* of the cards; subject however to be changed, should any thing fall to indicate a different one; after which, never look at your hand, till you are to play—without attending to the board no maxims or practice can make even a tolerable whist player.

8.—Observe silently and attentively the different systems of those with whom you commonly play; few but have their favorite one, the knowledge of which will give you a constant advantage: *one* leads by preference from an *ace*, another never but through necessity. (This will often direct you in putting on the king second.) The players of the *old school* never lead from a single card without six trumps; many do from *weakness;* some have a trick of throwing down high cards to their adversary's lead, and then affect to consider (though they have no alternative) to deceive:—Observation will enable you to counteract this, and turn it to your own profit.

9.—The best leads are from sequences of three cards or more. If you have none, lead from your most numerous suit, if strong in trumps, and rather from one headed by a king than a queen; but with three or four small trumps, I should prefer leading from a single card to a long weak suit.

N.B. This is contrary to the usual practice, especially of the players of the OLD SCHOOL.

10.—The more plainly you demonstrate your hand to your partner the better. Be particularly cautious not to deceive him in *his* or

your own leads, or when he is likely to *have* the lead—a concealed game may now and then succeed in the suits of your adversaries; but this should not be attempted before you have made a considerable proficiency; and then but seldom, as its frequency would destroy the effect.

11.—At the commencement of a game, if *you* have a good hand, or if your adversaries are considerably advanced in the score, play a bold game; if otherwise, a more cautious one.

12.—Be as careful of what you throw away, as what you *lead;* it is often of bad consequence to put down a tray, with a deuce in your hand. Suppose your partner leads the four, your right-hand adversary the five, and you put down the tray, it ought to be to a *certainty*, that you ruff it next time; but if he finds the *deuce* in your hand, and you frequently deceive him by throwing down superior cards, it will destroy his confidence, and prevent his playing his game on similar occasions. I would wish to inculcate these minor qualifications of whist playing to the beginners, because they are attainable by every body; and when once the great advantages of

this kind of correctness is seen, the *worst* player would practise it, as constantly as the best, attention being all that is necessary.

13.—Do not lead trumps, merely because an honour is turned up on your left, or be deterred from it, if on your right hand.—*Either* is proper, if the circumstances of your hand require trumps to be led; but *neither* otherwise.

14.—Finesses are generally right in *trumps*, or (if *strong* in *them*) in other suits; otherwise they are not to be risked but with caution.

15.—Never ruff an uncertain card, if *strong*, or omit doing it if *weak* in trumps; this is one of the few universal maxims, and cannot be too closely adhered to, even did you *know* the best of the suit was in your partner's hand: it has the double advantage of making an useless trump, and letting your partner into the state of your hand, who will play accordingly.

16.—Keep the command of your adversary's suit as long as you can with safety; but never that of your partner.

17.—Do not ruff a thirteenth card second hand if *strong*; but always, if *weak* in trumps.

18.—Always force the *strong*, seldom the *weak*, but never the *two*; otherwise you play your adversaries' game, and give the *one* an opportunity to make his small trumps, while the *other* throws away his losing cards. It is a very *general* as well as fatal error, but the extent of it is seldom comprehended by unskilful players, who seeing the good effect of *judicious forces*, practise them INJUDICIOUSLY, to their almost constant disadvantage. The following effect of a force is too obvious not to be instantly comprehended. I have only to tell the student, that the same principle operates through the fifty-two cards, however various their combinations; and that a steady consideration of it, is one of the first necessary steps towards acquiring an insight into the game.

A has a seizieme major in trumps, a quart major in a second, and a tierce major in a third suit. *B*, his adversary, has six small trumps, and the entire command of the fourth suit: in this case it is obvious that, *one force* on *A* gains the odd trick for *B*, who without it loses a slam. Though so *great* an effect may seldom be produced, still there is scarcely

a rubber where the truth of the maxim is not experimentally demonstrated.

19.—When, with a very strong suit, you lead trumps, in hope your partner may command them, shew your suit first. If you have the strength in trumps, in *your* hand, play them originally.

20.—With the ace and three other trumps, it is seldom right to win the first or second leads in that suit, if made by your adversaries, unless your partner ruffs some other.

21.—With a strong hand in trumps, particularly if you have a long suit, avoid ruffing, and still more over-ruffing your right-hand adversary, as much as possible. As this is a maxim, *less understood, less practised* and *more indispensably necessary*, than almost any other, I will endeavour to explain it to beginners, as clearly as I am capable of doing:—Cards being nearly equal, the point to which all the manœuvres of good whist players tend, is to establish a long suit, and to preserve the last trump, to bring it into play, and to frustrate the same play of their adversaries. With an honour (or even a ten) with three other trumps, by well managing them, you have a right to expect success. In this case do not

overtrump your right-hand adversary early in the hand; but throw away a losing card; by which, there remaining but twelve trumps, your own hand is strengthened, and your partner has the tenace, in whatever suit is led; whereas, had you over-ruffed you would have given up the whole game, to *secure one* trick. But there are reasons for breaking this rule: 1st. If your left-hand adversary has shewn a decided great hand in trumps, (in which case make your tricks while you can) or, 2dly, If your partner *decidedly means* to force you—to understand if this is the case, you are to observe, if your partner plays the winning or losing card, of the suit you have refused. If the *former*, it is by no means clear he *means* to force you, and you play *your own game*. If the *latter*, you are to suppose *him strong* in *trumps*, and depend on *this*, to protect *your* long suit: a due reflection on this, will convince you, of the value of that maxim, which enjoins you never to play a strong game, with a weak hand, or *vice versa*. A few deviations from *this*, effectually destroys *that confidence* necessary between partners, and introduces a confusion and consequences, that cannot be too carefully avoided, or too strenuously deprecated.

22.—If the circumstance of your hand require *two certain* leads in trumps, play off your *ace*, let your other trumps be what they may.

23.—It is a general maxim not to force your partner, unless strong in trumps yourself. There are, however, many exceptions to this rule: as,

1st. If your partner has led from a single card.

2d. If it saves or wins a particular point.

3d. If great strength in trumps is declared against you.

4th. If you have a probability of a *saw*.

5th. If your partner has been forced and did not trump out.

6th. It is often right in playing for an odd trick.

24.—It is difficult to judge *when* to lead trumps. The following situations will assist the beginner, to *reason*, and in general direct him *properly*:—

1st. With *six* trumps, on supposition your partner has a strong suit.

2d. If strong in other suits, though weak in trumps yourself.

3d. If your adversaries are playing from *weak* suits.

4th. If your adversaries are at the point of eight, and *you* have no honour, or probability of making a trump by a ruff.

25.—It is easy soon to discover the different strengths of *good* players, but more difficult with *bad* ones. When your adversary refuses to trump, and throws away a small card, you conclude his hand consists of a *strong* suit in *trumps*, with one *strong* and another *weaker* suit. If he throws an honour, you *know* he has *two* suits only, *one* of which is trumps. In the latter case, win tricks when you can. Avoid leading trumps, or to his suit; force *him*, and give your partner an opportunity to trump if possible. This maxim cannot be too maturely considered, as there is a fault which is constantly committed by bad players, and is amongst those most fatal in their consequences. The moment an adversary refuses to ruff, though a winning card, *they* in violation of common sense, trump out, and not unfrequently give away five or six tricks, which a judicious force would have prevented.

26.—If you are strong in trumps, and have the ace, king, and two more, of your right-

hand adversary's lead, there are two ways to play, either to pass it the first time, or else to put on the ace, and play the suit on to force your partner. If weak in trumps, put on the ace, but do not continue the suit.

27.—If you win your partner's lead with the queen, unless in trumps, do not return it; it is evident the ace or king lies behind him, and you give the tenace to the adversary.

28.—To lead from only three cards, unless in sequence, is bad play, and only proper when you have reason to think it is your partner's suit; in which case, play off the highest, though the king or queen.

N. B. This is contrary to the general practice, but undoubtedly right.

29.—The first object should be to save the game, if it appears in probable danger; the next to *win* it, if you have a reasonable hope of success, by any mode of play, though hazardous. If neither of these is the question, you should play to the *points* or score of the game. In other words, you should not give up the *certainty* of the *odd trick*, or scoring *five* or *eight*, for the equal chance of *two*, *six*, or *nine*; whereas you should risk an equal finesse that will prevent your adversaries from these scores by its success.

30.—It is generally right to return your partner's lead in trumps, unless he leads an *equivocal* card, such as nine or ten. These are called *equivocal*, because they are led with propriety, both from strong and weak suits. With a quart to a king—or nine, ten, knave and king of a suit, you lead the *nine*, as you do when it is the best of two or three of a suit.

31.—With only four trumps, do not lead one, unless your strong suit is established, except that with a tierce-major, and another trump, and a sequence to the king of three or more; it is good play to lead trumps twice, and then the knave of your suit, and continue till the ace is out.

32.—If you remain with the best trump, and *one* of your adversaries has three or more, do not play out, as it may stop the suit of your other adversary. If they *both* have trumps and your partner *none*, it is right to take out two for one.

33.—If strong in trumps, with the commanding card of your adversaries suit, and small ones, force your partner, if he has none of that suit, with the small ones, and keep the commanding card till the last.

34.—If your partner leads the ace and queen of a suit of which you have the king and two others, win his queen, that you may not stop his suit.

35.—If your right-hand adversary wins, and returns his partner's lead, should you have the best and a small one, play the latter. If your partner has the third best, he will probably make it. If your adversary is a bad player, I would not advise this, as they *never* finesse when they *ought* to do it.

N B. If weak in trumps, you should not venture this in other suits.

36.—If your right-hand adversary calls, and your *partner* leads *through him ;* with *ace* or *king* the *nine* and a small one, you should finesse the *nine*.

37.—If your partner calls before his turn, he means you should play a trump. Take every opportunity to shew your partner that you can command the trumps. In this case he will keep his own strong suit entire: whereas, if the strength of trumps is with the adversaries, his play would be to keep guard on their suits, and throw away from his own.

38.—With ace, knave, and another trump, it is right to finesse the knave to your partner's

lead; and if strong in *them* you should do the same in any suit. If he leads the ten of any suit, you pass it invariably with the ace and knave; unless one trick saves or wins any particular point.

39.—It is better to lead from ace nine, than ace ten, as you are more likely to have a tenace in the latter suit, if led by your adversary.

40.—If your partner, to *your* winning card, throws away the *best card* of any suit, it shows he wishes you to know he commands it; if the *second best*, it is to tell you he has no more of that suit.

41.—If very strong in trumps, it is always right to inform your partner of it as soon as possible. If fourth player, you are to win a small trump, and you have a sequence of three or more, win it with the highest, and play the lowest afterwards.

42.—If strong in trumps, do not ruff the second best of any suit your partner leads, but throw away a losing card, unless you have an established *suit*.

43.—If ten cards are played out, and there remains one entire suit, and your partner leads, if you have king, ten and another, and

six tricks, you have a certainty to make the odd one, if *you play right*, let the cards lie how they will; should your right-hand adversary put on an honour, you must *win* it, if not, put on the *ten:* with *five* tricks put on the king.

44.—Many good players, in playing tierce-majors, begin with the king and queen. This is often productive of mischief; as, when played at other times from king and queen only, the ace is kept up, and while each thinks his partners has it, and has played accordingly, it unexpectedly appears from the adversary, and disappoints their whole plan.

45.—If the fourth player wins his adversary's lead, it is better to return it than open a new suit, unless strong enough in it to suppor this partner.

46.—With ace, knave, and other, do not win the king led by your left-hand adversary. You either force him to change his lead, or give you tenace in his own suit.

47.—With ace, queen, &c. of a suit, of which your right-hand adversary leads the knave, put on the ace invariably. No good player, with king, knave and ten, will begin with the knave, of course it is finessing against yourself, to put on the queen, and as the king

is certainly behind you, you give away at least the lead, without any possible advantage.

48.—With only three of a suit, put on an honour on an honour; with four or more, you should not do it—except the *ace* should not be put on the *knave*.

49.—With king and *one more*, good players sometimes put it on second, sometimes not: if turned up it should invariably be put on, and generally in trumps. But queen or knave should never be played, unless a superiour honor is turned up on the right.

50.—In playing for an odd trick, you play a closer game than at other scores. You lead from single cards and force your partner, when at another time you would not be justified. It is seldom in this case proper to lead trumps: and few finesses are justifiable. It is a nice part of the game and experience with attention, will alone teach it with effect.

51.—If the trumps remain divided between you and your partner, and you have no winning card yourself, it is good play to lead a small trump, to put it in his hand to play off any that he may have, to give you an opportunity to throw away your losing cards.

A remains with two or more trumps, and two losing cards; his partner with a better trump, and two winning cards. It is evident, if he plays off a losing card, he will make merely his own trumps, but if he plays an inferiour trump, and put it into his partner's lead, he will play off his winning cards, and give *A* an opportunity to throw away his losing ones.

N. B. This continually occurs, and is necessary to be comprehended.

52. When your partner leads, win with the lowest of a sequence, to demonstrate your strength in *his* suit; but it is often right to win your *adversary's* lead with the *highest*, to keep him in ignorance.

53.—When your partner plays a thirteenth card, and most of the trumps are unplayed, he in general means you should put a high trump to strengthen his own hand.

54.—When you have but a moderate hand yourself, sacrifice it to your partner; he, if a good player, will act in the same manner.

55.—With *three*, return the *highest*; with *four*, the *lowest* of your partner's lead. This answers two purposes, by giving your partner an opportunity to finesse, and shewing him you have but three at most in his suit.

56.—With the ace, queen, and others of your right-hand adversary's lead, put on a small one, except he leads the knave, in which case put on the ace.

57.—When at eight, with two honours, look at your adversaries' score, and consider if there is a probability they should save their lurch, or win the game, notwithstanding your partner holds a third honour; if not, you should not call, as it gives a decided advantage against you in playing for tricks.

58.—Finessing in general is only meant against one card. There are, however, situations when much deeper are required; but theory alone, can never enable the beginner to discover these. Supposing it necessary you should make two out of the last three cards in a suit not yet played, your partner leads the nine, you have ace, ten, and a small one—*Query*, what are you to do?—*Answer*, pass it, though the finesse is against *three*; for if your partner *has* an honour in the suit, you make two tricks. If not, it is impossible by any mode of play whatever.

59.—With king, queen, &c. of your right-hand adversary's lead, put on one of them;

with queen, knave, and another, the knave; with two or more small ones, the lowest.

60.—The more critically you recollect the cards the better; at least you should remember the *trumps*, and the *commanding card* of each suit. It is possible to assist the memory by the mode of placing the cards remaining in your hands—viz. Place the trumps in the back part of your hand, your partner's lead the next, your adversary's next, and your own on the outside. It is also right to put thirteenth cards, in some known situation.

61.—It is highly necessary to be correct in leads. When a good player plays an eight and then a seven, I know he leads from a weak suit; the contrary, when he plays the seven first: the same even with a tray or a deuce. This is what bad players always err in, as they never can see the difference.

62.—If left with the last trumps, and some winning cards, with one losing one, play this first, as your adversary on the left may finesse, and the second best in your partner's hand make the trick; which could not be kept till the last.

63.—Should your partner refuse to trump a certain winning card, try to get the lead as

soon as you can, and play out trumps immediately.

64.—Good players never lead a nine or a ten, but for one of these reasons—

1st. From a sequence up to the king.

2d. From nine, ten, knave, and king.

3d. When the best of a weak suit not exceeding three in number.

If you have either *knave* or *king* in your *own* hand, you are certain it is for the latter reason, and that the whole strength of the suit is with your adversary, and play your game accordingly.

65.—If your partner leads the *nine* or *ten*, and you have an honour, with only one more, put it on: if with two or more, do not; with the ace and small ones, win it invariably; for it is better that *he* should finesse, in his own suit, than *you*.

66.—Unless you have a strong suit yourself, or reason to suppose your partner has one, do not trump out, unless you have six trumps.

67.—There are situations where even good players differ; if a queen is led on your right-hand, and you have ace or king and two small ones, you should *certainly* win it; but having

king or ace, ten and a small one, *I* invariably pass it, and for the following reasons—by passing it, if your partner has the ace or king, you clearly lie tenace, and the leader cannot possibly make a trick in the suit, which he must have done had you even the first trick, as he would lie tenace over *your* partner. If your partner has the *knave*, you lose a trick, but the odds are greatly against this.

68.—It is seldom right to lead from a suit in which you have a tenace. With ace, queen, &c. of one suit; king, knave, &c. of a second; and third weak one, the best play is to lead from the latter.

69.—When it is evident the winning cards are betwixt *you*, and your adversaries play an obscure game; but as clear a one as possible, if your partner has a good hand.

70.—It is equally advantageous to lead *up to*, as *through* an *ace;* not so much so to a *king*, and disadvantageous to the queen *turned up*.

71.—Avoid at first playing with those who instruct, or rather find fault, while the hand is playing. They generally are unqualified by ignorance, and judge from consequences;

but if not, advice while playing, does more harm than good, by confusing a beginner.

72.—It is seldom right to refuse to ruff when your partner, if a *good player*, visibly intends you should do it. If a bad *one*, your *own* hand should direct you.

73.—If you have ace, king, and two more trumps, and your partner leads them originally, insure three rounds in trumps; but if he leads (in consequence of *your* shewing your strength) a nine, or any equivocal card, in that case, pass it the first time; by which you will have the lead, after three rounds of trumps; a most material advantage.

74.—There is often judgment required in taking the penalties of a revoke. Before the score is advanced, if the party revoking has won nine tricks, the least consideration will shew, that the adversaries should take three of them, for if *they* add three to their own score, they still leave the odd trick to the former; but if the revoking party are at *eight*, it is better for the adversary to score three points, as the odd trick leaves the former at *nine*, which is in every respect a worse point than eight. On other occasions, it is only to calculate how the different scores will remain

after each mode of taking the penalty; and it will be obvious which will be the most advantageous—never losing sight of the points of the game; *i. e.* scoring eight or five yourself, or preventing your adversary from doing so.

75.—With ace, queen, and ten, of your right-hand adversary's lead, put on the ten.

76.—When your left-hand adversary refuses to trump *a winning card*, for fear of being over-trumped by *your* partner, and throws away a losing card, if you have the commanding card of the suit he discards, play it out before you continue the former.

77.—When all the trumps are out, if you have the commanding card of your adversary's suit, you may play your own as if you had the thirteenth trump in your own hand.

78.—If *A*, your right-hand adversary, leads a card, and *his* partner *B*, putting on the knave or queen, *your's* wins with the king—should *A* lead a small card of that suit again, if you have the *ten*, put it on. It is probable, by doing this, you keep the commanding card in your partner's hand, and prevent the second best from making.

79.—If weak in trumps, keep guard in your adversaries' suits. If *strong*, throw away from them, and discard as much as possible from your partner's strong suits, in either case.

80.—Should your left-hand adversary lead the king, to have the finesse of the knave, and it comes to your lead, if you have the queen and one more, it is evident the finesse will succeed. In this case, play the *small one* through *him*, which frequently will prevent him from making the finesse, though he has originally played for it.

81.—If your partner shews a weak game, force him, whether or no you are otherwise entitled to do it.

82.—When you are at the score of four or nine, and your adversaries, though *eight*, do not call, if *you* have no honour, it is evident your partner has two at least. It is equally so if you have *one*, that he has at *least* another. If both parties are at eight, and neither calls, each must have one.

A little reflection will enable the beginner to make a proper advantage of these data.

83.—When your partner leads a card of which you have the best and *third*, and your right-hand adversary puts on the forth, the

second only remaining—it is a common-received, but erroneous opinion, that the chance of succeeding in the finesse is *equal;* but here *calculation* will shew, that as the last player has one card more than his partner, it is that *proportion* in favor of his having it. With *three* cards, it will be three to two against making the finesse.

84.—Moderate players have generally a decided aversion to part with the best trump, though single; thinking, that as they cannot lose it, and it can make but one trick, it is immaterial when it does so—this is a dangerous fault. When your adversary plays out his strong suit, ruff it immediately, before you give his partner an opportunity to throw off his losing cards. Do not, however, go into the contrary extreme, or trump with the best trump, with small ones in your hand, for fear of being over-trumped. This is a nice part of the game, and can only be understood from practice and attentive reasoning.

85.—It frequently happens that your partner has an opportunity to shew his strong suit, by renouncing to a lead. If you have a single card in this, play it before you force him, let your strength in trumps be what it may; as

it is the way to establish the *saw*, which is almost always advantageous, should the second player put on the ace to prevent it; still it is of great utility by establishing your partner's suit.

86.—*A* has ace, knave, ten, and a small card of the suit led by the right-hand adversary. *Query*—Which is he to play? *Answer*—In trumps, the *ten;* in other suits the small ones. For this reason—in trumps, a good player, with king, queen, &c. leads the lowest; in other suits the *king:* and in the latter case, of course an honour must be behind you; and be it in *either* hand, you can do no good by putting on the ten; by keeping the three together you render it impossible for your adversary to make one trick in the suit.

87.—It often happens that with only three cards remaining in his hand, the leader has the worst trump, and ace, queen, or some tenace of another suit. In this case he should lead the trump, to put it into his adversary's hand to play. By these means he preserves the tenace. This, though self-evident on proper consideration, is what none but good players ever think of.

88.—Though it is certainly more regular to win your adversary's as well as partner's lead with the lowest of a sequence, still I recommend occasional deviations from that maxim; as it is of the greatest advantage to give your partner every information in *his*, or *your own*, so it is often to deceive your adversaries in *their suits*. It will now and then deceive your partner also; but if done with judgment, it is, I think, oftener attended with good than bad effect.

There are also other situations, where it is highly necessary to deceive the adversary. *A*, last player, has a tierce-major, and a small trump; a tierce-major, with two others of a second suit; king, and a small one of a third; with queen or knave, and a small one of the fourth, of which his adversary leads the *ace*. It is so very material for *A* to get the lead, before he is forced, that he should without hesitation throw down the queen, as the most likely method to induce his adversary to change his lead.—But this mode of play should be reserved for material occasions, and not by its frequency give cause for its being suspected.

89.—Beginners find it difficult to distinguish between original and forced leads. When a player changes his original suit, he commonly leads his strongest card of another, to give his partner the advantage of a finesse. In this case you are to play this, as if it was your *own* or *adversary's* lead—keep the commanding card, tenace, &c. and do not return it, as if it was an original lead.

90.—There is nothing more necessary to explain to the beginner, than what is usually denominated *under-play*, as it is a constant engine in the hands of the *experienced*, to use successfully against the inexperienced player. In other words, it is to return the lowest of your left-hand adversary's lead, though you have the highest in your hand, with the view of your partner's making the third best, if he has it, and still retaining the commanding card in your hand.

91.—To explain this farther, suppose *A* fourth player, has ace and king of his left-hand adversary's lead; to under-play, he wins the trick with the ace, and returns the small one, which will generally succeed, if the leader has not the second and third in his own hand. You will see by this, if you *lead*

from a *king*, &c. and your right-hand adversary, after winning with a ten or knave return it, you have no chance to make your *king*, but by putting it on.

92.—The following is another situation to under-play: *A* remains with the first, third, and fourth cards of a suit, of which he has reason to suppose his left-hand adversary has the *second guarded;* by playing the fourth, it is often passed, and *A* makes every trick in the suit.

N. B. This sort of play is always right in trumps; but if weak in *them*, it is generally the best play to make your certain tricks as fast as you can; for if you have not *your share of them*, somebody must have *more* than their *own*, and of consequence be weak in some other suit, which probably is your strong one.

93.—Keep the trump card as long as you can, if *your* partner leads trumps; the contrary, if your adversary leads them. In the former instance, supposing the eight turned up, and you have the nine, throw away the latter; in the last, (though you have the seven or six) play the card you turned up.

94.—When *your* partner is to lead, and you call before he plays, it is to direct him, if he has no honour, to play off the best trump he has.

95.—Though according to the strict laws of whist all words and gestures are prohibited; yet like all other laws not enforced by penalties, they are continually violated. There are, indeed, few players who do not discover, in some degree, the strength of their game, or their approbation or disapprobation of their partner's play, &c. As this is on one side often a material advantage to the party transgressing, so it is quite allowable for the adversaries to make use of it. Attentive and silent observation will frequently give an early insight into the game, and enable you to play your hand to more advantage, than by adhering to more regular maxims.

96.—Though tenace, or the advantage of position, cannot be reduced to a *certainty*, as at *piquet;* and that it is often necessary to relinquish it for more certain advantages; still no man can be a whist player who does not understand it. The principle is *simple*, but the combinations are *various*. It is easily conceived, that if *A* has ace, queen, and a small card of a suit, of which *B* has king, knave, and another: if *A* leads the small card, he remains tenace, and wins two tricks; whereas, if he plays the ace, he gives it up,

and makes but one. But if *B* is to lead, he has no tenace, and lead which card he will, he must make *one* trick, and can make no more. This easy instance, well considered, will enable the player, with some practice, to adapt it to more apparently intricate situations.

97.—The following cases which happen frequently, will further explain this:—*A* is left with four cards and the lead, viz. the second and fourth trump, and the ace and a small card of a suit not played. Nine trumps being out, *B*, his left-hand adversary, has the first and third trump, king, and a small one of the suit of which *A* leads the ace. *Query*—What card should *B* play? *Answer*—The *king;* by which he brings it to an equal chance whether he wins three tricks or two; but if he keeps the king, he cannot possibly win three.

By placing the cards you will perceive, that if *B's* partner has a better card than *A's*, it prevents *A* from making either of his trumps, which, had *B* retained the king, he must have done.

98.—*A* has three cards of a suit not played, (the last remaining) viz. king, queen, and

ten; *B*, ace, knave, and another; *A* leads the *king;* if *B* wins it, he gives up tenace, and gets but one trick; whereas, if he does not, he makes his ace and knave by preserving it.

99.—*A* has ace, knave, and ten, of a suit which his partner leads.—*Query*—Which should he put on? *Answer*—The *ten*, particularly if it is a forced lead; by this he probably wins two tricks. If he puts on the ace, and his partner has no honour in his suit, he gives up the tenace, and can only win one.

100.—Tenace is easily kept against your *right-hand;* but impossible, without great skill, against your *left-hand* adversary.

101.—To explain what is meant by playing to points, place the following hand before you: *A* has the two *lowest* trumps, and two forcing cards, with the lead. The two *best demonstrably* in the adversaries' hands; though *uncertain* if in the *same*, or *divided*. Nine cards being played, and no other trump remaining—*Query*—What is *A* to play? *Answer*—This can only be decided by the situation of the score, and whether or no it justifies the hazarding two tricks for one. The least consideration will convince the player, that before the score is much advanced, it would be

highly improper for *A* to play a *trump*, because he manifestly ventures two tricks for one; of course he should secure two tricks by playing a forcing card. But suppose *A* to be at the score of *seven*, and that he has won six tricks, he should then as clearly venture to play the trump, because, if the trumps are divided, he wins the game, or otherwise, remains at seven, which is preferable to the certainty of scoring nine. But if the adversary is at nine, this should not be done, as by hazarding the odd trick, you hazard the game.

N. B. This mode of reasoning will in general direct you where and why finesses are proper or improper. For there is scarcely one, though ever so right in general, but what the different situations of the score and hand may render dangerous and indefensible.

102.—The following critical stroke decided one of the most material rubbers that was ever played, and is recommended to the attentive perusal even of proficients:

The parties were each at *nine*. *A* had won *six* tricks, and remained with *knave* and a *small* trump, and two diamonds, with the *lead*. *B*, his left hand adversary, with the *queen* and *ten* of trumps, and two clubs. *C*, his partner, with two small trumps, and two diamonds.

D, last player, with ace and a small trump, a club, and a heart. *A* led a diamond, which being passed by *B*, was to be won by *D*. *Query*—How is *D* to play, to make it possible to win the odd trick? *Answer*—*D* saw it was not possible, unless his partner had either the two best trumps, or the first and third, with a successful finesse. He therefore trumped with the *ace*, led the small one, and won the game.

N. B. In another score of the game this would not be justifiable, as the chance of losing a trick is greater than of gaining one by it.

103.—The attentive perusal (in the mode prescribed) of these maxims, will, I think, with a little practice, enable a beginner to play with very *good cards* to advantage. The difficulty of the game does not consist in *this*; for aces and kings *will* make tricks, and *no* skill can make a *ten* win a *knave*. But there are hands which frequently occur, when skilful players win, where bunglers lose points; and (unless when the cards run very high) it is on the playing of *such* success depends, viz. ace or king, and three other trumps, a tierce-major, with others of a *second* suit with a *probable trick* in *a third*—the player's plan

should be, to remain either with the *last trump*, or the *last* but *one*, with the *lead*; and to accomplish this *last*, he must *not win* the second lead with the commanding trump, but reserve it for the third. Nothing *then* but five trumps in *one hand*, can probably prevent his establishing his long suit, for he *forces* out the *best* trump, and the thirteenth brings in his suit again, which (without the lead after the third round of trumps) would be impossible.

104.—As this maxim is of the utmost consequence, the following cases, which happen frequently, are added, to make it more clearly understood:—

1st. *A* has ace and three trumps, a strong suit, headed by a tierce-major, and a probable trick in a third, with the lead. *Query*—How should this hand be played? *Answer*—*A* should lead a trump; but if his partner wins and returns it, *A* should *not* put on his ace, but suffer it to be won by his adversary. When either *A* or his partner gets the lead, he of course plays a trump, which being won by *A*, he remains *with the lead*, and *one*, but not the *best* trump, though they should not be equally divided. This (his strong suit having forced out the *best*) establishes it again, not-

withstanding the adversary may command the other suits, which are by these means prevented from making.

N. B. Had the ace been put on the second lead, the force would have been on *A*, and *his strong* suit entirely useless.

2d. *A*, with a similar hand, has ace, king, and two small trumps. If the adversaries lead trumps, he should not win the *first* trick, even if *last* player. *By this*, after the second lead, he still retains the *best* for the *third*, according to the maxim, and establishes his suit (though the best trump keeps up against him) unless there are five in one hand originally.

3d. With ace, queen, and two small trumps do not win the *knave* led on your *left-hand*, but let it be played again; according to the same maxim.

As the following, or nearly similar situations frequently occur, I recommend them to the attentive perusal of those students who feeling, within themselves, that they comprehend what I have called the alphabet, wish to procure a gradual insight into the game. The whole combinations of which, I cannot too often repeat, proceed from very plain and simple principles; but it requires much re-

flection to comprehend the same maxim, when applied to inferior cards, that appears self-evident in the superiors. There is scarcely a player, who if he has the ace, king, and knave of the suit of which his right-hand adversary turns up the queen, but will lead the king, and wait for the return to finesse his knave. But with ace, queen and ten, (the knave being turned up on his right-hand) the same player will not see that his lead, if he plays a trump, is the *queen*, and that one and the same principle actuates the players on both occasions, and so on through the suit.

It constantly happens, that the adversary on the right-hand having won his partner's lead with the ace or king, returns the *knave*. In this case do not put on the queen, as the probability is against its being finessed. But on all these occasions, play without hesitation, which constantly directs a skilful adversary where to finesse to advantage.

It frequently happens when you have led from six trumps, that after your second lead you remain with three or four trumps, the *best* in your adversary's hand; in these situations play a small trump, which has these two advantages—1st. To prevent the stopping of

your partner's suit—and 2d. To give you the tenace, in whatever suit is led by the adversary. This *mutatis mutandis* will shew that it is bad play to play out the best trump, leaving others in the hand of *one* of your adversaries. It may do good to keep it up, by stopping a suit, and can answer no good purpose whatever to play it out.

A remains with the best trump, (say the ten) and a small one, with some losing cards, *B*, his partner, having clearly the second best (say the nine) with some winning cards. The adversaries having one small trump and winning cards of the other two suits. *A* is forced. *Query*—How is he to play? *Answer*—*A* is to ruff with his best, and lead out his small trump, by which he puts it into his partner's hand, to make *his* winning cards, and renders those of his adversaries of no use whatever. This mode of play would sometimes be right, even when it was not *certain* whether the second best trump were in his partner's or his adversary's hand; but the fine player alone can be expected to distinguish on so nice an occasion.

There are points where good players disagree. Some play what is called a *forward*—

others a more *timid* game. Some commonly put on a king, second; others, but rarely. In these cases, a man may play either way, without committing error; but where all good players are of the same opinion, it should be received as an axiom—no good player puts on a queen, knave or ten second; of course, it should on all occasions be carefully avoided.

105.—The possession of the last trump is of most material advantage in the hands of a good player. *A* has the thirteenth trump, with the ace and four small ones of a suit not played, of which the adversary leads the king and queen; by passing them both, *A* probably makes three tricks in the suit; but had he won the king, he could not possibly make more than one.

106.—When it is in your option to be eight or nine, it is material always to choose the former score.

107.—Observe carefully what is *originally* discarded by each player, and whether, *at the time*, the lead is with the *partner* or *adversary*. If with the *former*, it is invariably meant to direct the *partner*—If with the *latter*, it is frequently intended to deceive the *adversary*, and induce him to lead to his strong suit.

108.—You are not only to take every method to preserve the tenace or advantage of position to yourself, when it is evident that the winning cards lie between *you* and your adversary; but also to give it, as much as possible to your partner, when you perceive the strength, in any suit, is in the hands of *him* and your left-hand adversary; always keeping in your mind, that *when* the *latter* or *you* lead, it is *for the adversary*. It frequently happens, that by winning your partner's trick, when last player, you accomplish this. *A* has *king*, *knave*, (or any other second and fourth card) with a small one of a suit, that *B*, his left-hand adversary, has the first and third, and another, with the lead. If *A* leads his small card, and *B your partner*, wins it; you, *last player*, should if possible win the trick, though it is your partner's. By which means you prevent *A* from making a trick, which he must have done, had the lead remained with *B*.

109.—As I have ventured to recommend occasional deviations from what is considered as one of the most classic maxims; *i. e.* the leading from single cards, without that strength in trumps hitherto judged indispensably necessary to justify it; I give the reasons that

influence my opinion in favour of this practice, with those generally alleged against it, leaving the reader to determine between them. Two objections are made, which it cannot be denied, *may* and *do* happen. The first, that if your partner has the king of the suit *guarded*, and the ace behind it, he loses it; which would not be the case, if the lead come from the adversary. The second, and most material is, that your partner, if he wins the trick, may lead out trumps, on the supposition it is *your strong suit*, or the *adversaries* from suspecting your intention. On the contrary, the *constant* and *certain* advantages are the preservation of the tenace in the *other two suits*, which I suppose you to *have*, and the *probable* one of making your *small* trumps, which you could not otherwise do. *A* has four small trumps, ace, queen, &c. of the second suit; king, knave, &c. of a third; and a single card of the fourth. In these sort of hands, I am of opinion, that the chance of winning, by leading the single card, is much greater than of losing tricks. And I appeal to those who are in the habit of attending whist tables, whether they do not frequently see the players, who proceed more exactly according to the max-

ims of Hoyle, &c. after losing the game, trying to demonstrate that this ought not to have happened, and that they have been vanquished by the bad, not good play of their adversaries. I do not recommend, *in general*, leading from single cards, unless very strong in trumps; but with such hands as I have mentioned, I am convinced it may be occasionally done with *very great*, though not *certain* advantage. It may not be unnecessary to inform the reader, that most of Hoyle's maxims were collected during what may be called the infancy of whist; and that he himself, so far from being able to teach the game, was not fit to sit down even with the third rate players of the present day.

I shall conclude these maxims by a short recapitulation of the most material ones, by way of fixing them in the minds of the readers.

1st. Let them be assured, that without comprehending the leads, modes of playing sequences, and an attentive observation of the board, it is impossible to make any progress in the science of whist, as to learn to *spell* before they know their alphabet.

2d. That accustoming themselves to reason by analogy, will alone teach them to vary their

play according to circumstances; and shew them, that the best play in *some*, is the worst in *different* situations of the game. It is common to see even good players hazard the game, merely to gain the applause of ignorant by-standers, by making as much of their cards as they are capable of; and this pitiful ambition cannot be too much guarded against. Avoid also the contrary extreme, the faults of the *old*, and many of the imitators of the *new* school. These never part with a tenace, or *certain* trick, though for the probability of making *several;* and are like fencers who parry well but cannot attack. No player of this kind can ever excel, though they reach mediocrity.

I must also repeat my advice to *proficients*, to vary their play according to the set they are engaged with; and recollect that it would be of no advantage to speak French like Voltaire, if you lived with people who are ignorant of the language.

ON LEADS.

1.—The safest leads are, from sequences of three or more cards *lead* the *highest*, and *put on* the *lowest* to your partner's lead; put the *highest* on your adversary's. With a tierce to the king and several others, begin with the *knave*.

2.—With ace, king, knave, and *three* small trumps, play the *ace* and *king*—with only *two*, the *king*, and wait for the finesse of the *knave*. In other suits, without great strength in trumps, or with the hopes of a particular *point*, do not wait for the finesse.

3.—Ace, king, and five others, lead the ace in *all suits*. With four or less, the lowest, if trumps. In other suits, always the ace, unless all the trumps remaining are with you and your partner; in this case, a small one.

4.—Ace, queen, knave, &c. in all suits the *ace*. Ace, queen, ten, with others, in *trumps*, a small one; but if with three, unless very strong in trumps, lead the ace in other suits

5.—Ace, knave, with small ones, lead the lowest in trumps; in other suits, if with more

than *two*, lead the ace, unless very strong in trumps.

6.—Ace, with four small ones, in trumps, lead the *lowest*. If with four or more, in other suits, and not very strong in trumps, the *ace*.

N. B. It is the general custom with ace and one other, to lead the ace; this is right, if you have reason to think it your partner's suit, otherwise lead the small.

7.—King, queen, ten, &c. in all suits, lead the king; but if it *passes*, do not pursue the lead, as *certain* the ace is in your partner's hand, as it is often kept up, but change your lead, and wait for the return from your partner when you have the finesse of the ten, if necessary.

8.—King, queen, and five others, in all suits, the *king*. With four or less in trumps, lead the lowest. In other suits always the king, unless you have the two only remaining trumps, if so, you may play a small one.

9.—King, knave, ten, &c. in all suits, lead the ten. King, knave, and two or more small ones, the lowest.

N. B. You should not lead from king, knave, and a small one, unless it is clearly your partner's suit, in which case, play off your king and knave.

10.—Queen, knave, nine, and others, lead the queen. Queen, knave, with one other, the queen. Queen, knave, with two more, the lowest. Queen, ten, and two others, the lowest. Queen, and three small ones, the lowest. Queen, or knave, with only two, the queen or knave.

N. B. The trump-card sometimes occasions a deviation from these rules. *A* has the ace or king, with a sequence from the ten downwards, of the suit of which his left-hand adversary turns up knave, or queen—*A* should lead the *ten*. If the knave or queen be put on, you have a finesse on the return, with the nine, if not, your partner, with an honour, will pass it, and is either way advantageous.

The following calculations are sufficient for a beginner: deeper ones frequently puzzle even the proficient.

That either player has not one named card, not in your hand, is ..... 2 to 1

5 to 4 in favour of his having .. 1 of 2

5 to 2 ..... 1 in 3

4 to 1 ..... 1 in 4

N. B. The odds are so considerable, that no player has two or more named cards, that scarce any situation justifies playing on this supposition, except the impossibility of *saving* or *winning the game* otherwise: of course further calculations are more for curiosity than utility.

The odds of the game are calculated according to the points, and with the deal:

1 love . . . . . 10 to 9
2 love . . . . . 10 to 8

and so on, except that nine is considered as something worse than eight. It is three to one in favour of the first game.

N. B. Notwithstanding that calculations are in general accurate, it is difficult to conceive that 10 in 20 is 3 to 1, while 5 in the 10 is but 2 to 1, and even 6 in 10 is but 5 to 2. I am convinced whoever bets the 5 to 1, will lose on a long run; and on the contrary, he who bets the 2 to 1, and 5 to 2, will gain in the same proportion.

The odd trick has been always supposed in favour of the leader; but this is an error, as the dealer has the advantage in this, as in every other score.

LAWS OF WHIST.

1.—If a card is turned up in dealing, the adverse party on naming it, may call a new deal, unless they have looked at or touched the cards, so as to have occasioned it; but if any card, except the last, is faced, it is undoubtedly a new deal.

2.—Should any card-player have but twelve cards, and the others their proper number, the deal is good, and he who has the twelve cards, pays for any renounce he may have made; but if either have fourteen cards, the deal is *lost*.

3.—If the dealer does not turn up the last card, the deal is lost.

4.—The dealer should leave the last card on the table till he has played; after which nobody can ask for it, though they may inquire what is trumps at any time. Should he leave it on the table after the first round, it may be called, as if shewn by accident.

5.—Every person has a right before he plays, to call on the players to place their cards before them, which is, in other words, to ask who played them. It is, therefore, a quibble to say they have no right to make that demand.

6.—The partner who reminds his partner to call after the trump is turned up, forfeits a point.

7.—If one of the players omit playing to a trick, and remains with a card too many, it is the option of the adversaries to call a new deal.

8.—If *A* plays out of his turn to his partner's lead, the *last* player may play before the *first:* if to his *adversary's*, his partner may be compelled to, or prevented from winning the trick at their option.

9.—Mistakes relative to tricks may be rectified at any time during the game, whether called or not.—Also honours, if proved to have been *called* in time, though not scored; but they cannot be claimed after the trump is turned up.

10.—If one party calls at any score but eight, the adversaries may, after consulting, call a new deal; the same, if one calls without *two*, or the other answers without *one* honour.

11.—If any player calls *after* he has played, the adversaries may call a new deal; but not consult together.

12.—If any person plays *out of his turn*, the adversaries have the option to call *that* card at any time, or direct the player, whose turn it was, to play any suit they choose.

13.—If *A*, supposing that he has won a trick, leads again before his partner has played to it, the adversaries may oblige his partner to win it, if he can.

14.—Any player may call a card from his adversary, if he names it, and proves the separation. Should he name a wrong one, he may have his best or worst card called of any suit played during the deal.

15.—Cards thrown down cannot be taken up again; but may be called by the adversaries. They may be shewn down by the player, if sure of every trick.

16.—There are, in fact, four penalties on a revoke, which take place of every other score. The adversaries may take three tricks from the party revoking, or three from their score, or add three to their own; and if there still should remain enough to make the party revoking game, they cannot win it, but remain at nine.

17.—A revoke is not established before the party revoking has played again, or the trick been turned and quitted; but the adversaries, at their option, may call from the highest or lowest of the suit at the time, or the card shewn at any time during the deal.

18.—If a revoke is claimed, the adversaries forfeit the penalties of a revoke, if they mix the cards before it is determined.

19.—No revoke can be claimed after the cards are cut for the next deal.

☞ It is now settled, that either of the players may insist on the cards being placed at any time previous to their being put together. It is also settled, that where a bet is made, that either of the parties scores two, the bet is won by honours, though the adversary has won the game by cards. Supposing it betted, that *A* makes two points, if *B*, his adversary, being at seven, makes three by cards, if *A* has two by honours, he still WINS HIS BET.

PROPOSED LAWS.

THOUGH these laws are excellent as far as they go, yet experience convinces us they are inadequate to meet the various cases that continually occur at whist tables. Hence disputes, wagers, references, &c. arise, which are often decided differently by different referees, unsatisfactorily to the disputants, and sometimes unaccountably to those interested. It has therefore long been a desideratum, that a

Code should be attempted, which having undergone the ordeal of examination by proper judges, should, with any addition they may think proper to make, be hung up in the various club-rooms, as a classical authority to be referred to on all occasions. As nobody yet has undertaken this necessary task, whose acknowledged judgment would prevent all difference of opinion, I have attempted something of the kind. The cases, with their decisions, I know to have happened; and the consequent rules which I endeavour to establish, are founded on the following principles of all laws, viz. That *penalties*, should be in exact proportion to the *advantages possible* to accrue from the transgression.

Whether these regulations are adopted or not, if they stimulate some person more capable of the task to accomplish what I fail in, I shall by no means regret the trouble I have taken, or be mortified at the rejection of my opinions.

Case 1.—The parties were each at the score of 8. *A*, the elder hand called, having but one honour in his hand, and his partner did not answer it. *B*, the next adversary, *though he had two honours* did not call, as he

of course thought it could be to no purpose. The game being played out was won against the honours. This was referred on the spot, and decided in favour of the tricks; but in my opinion, so improperly, that I do not hesitate to propose the following Law to be added to the present Code:—

"Whoever calls, having only one honour in his hand should forfeit in proportion to any advantage that actually *does* or *may* possibly accrue, from the fault. Should it prevent the adversaries from calling, after the hand is played out, the honours shall take place of the tricks."

Case 2.—The dealer after shewing the trump card, through awkwardness, let it fall on its face. It was determined on the spot that the deal should not stand good, but the card having been seen, as there could be no possible advantage made by the mistake, I am of a different opinion, and propose the following addition to the 3d law as it now stands in this book—

"But if the card is shewn and falls on its face by accident *afterwards:* then the deal to stand good."

CASE 3.—*A* playing out of his turn, *B* his partner was directed to play a trump, *B* however led another suit, and three or four cards were played before it was discovered that *B* had a trump in his hand. It was referred to me on the spot, as no printed laws reached the case. *I* decided that the cards should be taken up again and a trump led by *B* as directed. This decision was approved by both parties, and I propose it as a law on any similar occasion.

CASE 4.—*A* called at 8, his partner did not answer, though he had an honour, having a bet on the odd trick. The adversaries contended that the deal should not stand, and a wager was laid in consequence and referred to me. I decided that the *game* was fairly won, because there could be no possible advantage made of the circumstance as far as related to the *game*, though it might as to the *trick*, had that been the case referred. I think it impossible to object to the following law, viz.—

"No one is obliged to answer to his partner's call even though he has the other two honours in his hand."

CASE 5.—*A* at the score of 8, on gradually opening his hand, saw two honours in it immediately and told his partner of it, who did not answer. *A* continuing to look through his cards found a third honour, and shewed them down. It was contended that he had no right to do this, and decided as I hear against him; but I am fully convinced improperly, and I propose as a Law, that

"No man having three honours in his hand can be precluded from taking advantage of them at any time previous to his playing a card."

I shall now attempt to frame a Law, which, if agreed to, will in my opinion, put a stop to a practice that, though perhaps not meant so, is in itself absolutely unfair, and what is still worse, is the parent of all those unpleasant disputes and altercations which form the only objections to a game in every other respect calculated for rational amusement. I need scarcely add, that I mean the discovery, by words or gestures, of your approbation or dislike to your partner's play, before the deal is absolutely finished. I do not mean to prevent talking over the last hand between the deals, but that it should be absolutely prohibited un-

der a severe penalty to say a word between the turning up of the trump card and playing the last card of the deal, except what is already allowed by the rules of the game—such as to ask what are trumps, to desire the cards may be drawn, &c. The Law I propose is this—

"Whoever shall by word or gesture, manifestly discover his approval or disapprobation of his partner's mode of play, or ask any questions but such as are specifically allowed by the existing Laws of Whist, the adversary shall either add a point to his own score, or deduct one from the party so transgressing at his option."

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE been desired by some beginners to whom this book is particularly addressed, to give a minute definition of two words, which though *universally* used are not *generally* understood. I mean *Tenace* and *Finesse*. Indeed the game depends so much on the comprehension of their principles, that any man

desirous of obtaining even a competent knowledge of it, will never regret the trouble of the study.

Many parts of whist are mechanical, and neither maxims nor instructions are necessary to inform the beginner, that an ace wins a king; or that you must follow the suit played, if you have one in your hand.

The principle of the *Tenace* is simple. If *A* has the ace and queen of a suit, and *B* his adversary, has the king and knave, the least consideration will shew that if *A* leads *B* wins a trick, and *vice versa* of course, in every such situation it is the mutual plan of players by leading a losing card to put it into the adversary's hand to oblige *him* to *lead* that suit, whereby you preserve the tenace. So far is easily comprehended; but it requires attention with practice to apply the *principle*, so obvious in the *superior* to the *inferior* cards, or see that the same tenace operates occasionally with the seven and five, as the ace and queen, and is productive of the same advantage: *A*, *last* player, remains with the ace and queen of a suit not played, the *last* trump, and a losing card. *B*, his *left-hand adversary*, leads a forcing card. *Query*—How is *A* to

play? *Answer*—If three tricks win the game, or any particular point, he is not to ruff, but throw away his losing card, because his left-hand adversary being then obliged to lead to his suit, he remains tenace, and must make his ace and queen. But upon a supposition that making the four tricks gains him the rubber, he should then take the force, as in these situations you are justified in giving up the tenace for an equal chance of making any material point.

The *Finesse* has a near affinity to the tenace, except that the latter is equally the object where *two*, and the former only where there are *four* players. *A* has the ace and queen of a suit led by his partner, now the dullest beginner will see it proper to put on the queen; and this is called finessing it, and the intention is obviously to prevent the king from making, if in the hand of his right-hand adversary. Should it not be there it is evident you neither gain nor lose by making the finesse; but few players carry this idea down to the inferior cards, or see that a trick might be made by a judicious finesse, against an eight, as a king—but to know exactly when this should be done, requires more skill than

in the more obvious cases, united with memory and observation. Another case of finesse even against *two* cards frequently occurs, and the reason on reflection is self-evident.

A leads the ten of a suit of which his partner has the ace, knave, and a small one; *B* should finesse or let the ten pass; even though he knows the king or queen are in his left-hand adversary's hand: because he preserves the tenace and probably makes two tricks; whereas had he put on his ace, he could make but *one*—in short, tenace is the game of position, and finesse, the art of placing yourself in the most advantageous one.

END.

(Feb., 1891; 20,000)

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